

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 250885

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (OMISSION LINE 2, PARA 3)

E.O. 11652: GDS 12/31/81

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, XT, NATO

SUBJECT: SURVIVABILITY OF NATO HEADQUARTERS

REF: USNATO 4455

1. WILBERFORCE OF UK EMBASSY CALLED ON DEPT. OFFICER ON INSTRUCTIONS TO DISCUSS QUESTION OF SURVIVABILITY OF NATO HEADQUARTERS IN TIME OF WAR. HE SAID THAT BRITISH ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS RESULTING FROM SOLE US OPPOSITION TO FEASIBILITY STUDY ON HARDENING OF NATO HEADQUARTERS. WILBERFORCE STATED ALLIES SEEM TO BE GAINING IDEA THAT BY ITS OPPOSITION TO FEASIBILITY STUDY TOGETHER WITH SUPPORT OF RECONSTITUTING THE NAC IN NORTH AMERICA THAT THE US SEES LITTLE ROLE FOR THAT BODY IN WAR TIME.

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2. WILBERFORCE SAID BRITISH SHARE OUR VIEW THAT COSTS OF HARDENING HEADQUARTERS SITE WOULD BE EXCESSIVE AND BELIEVE THAT RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE FEASIBILITY STUDY WOULD CONFIRM THIS FACT AFTER WHICH THE ENTIRE PROJECT COULD THEN BE SHELVED. BY CONSENTING TO THE STUDY, US COULD AVOID A "DAMAGING ROW IN THE COUNCIL,"

3. DEPARTMENT OFFICER REPLIED THAT WHILE US ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE NAC IT COULD SEE LITTLE USE IN GOING AHEAD WITH A FEASIBILITY STUDY WHICH WILL CONFIRM THE IMPRACTICALITY OF HARDENING NATO HEADQUARTERS. HOWEVER, HE PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE QUESTION FURTHER AND TO GIVE WILBERFORCE FULLER REPLY.

4. WE HAVE TOLD WILBERFORCE THAT WE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO* FIN ANY INDICATION IN THE EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS IN NATO COMMITTEES WHICH HAD CONSIDERED THIS MATTER THAT A FEASIBILITY STUDY MIGHT NOT RESULT IN A PROMPT DECISION TO CONSTRUCT A NEW HARDENED HEADQUARTERS AT EVERE. WE FURTHER INDICATED THAT THE CONSTRUCTION WAS TO BE PART OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF NICSMA ACCOMMODATIONS AT EVERE WHICH WE ALSO OPPOSE AT THIS TIME. WE THEN GAVE THE REASONS FOR OUR POSITION ALONG THE LINES OF THE PAPER QUOTED IN USNATO 4455.

5. MR. WILBERFORCE ALSO CALLED ON DOD OFFICIALS, AND STRESSED THE SAME CONCERNS AS OUTLINED IN PARAS 1 AND 2 ABOVE. KISSINGER

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